



Southwest Virginia Firefighters Association

We Protect Southwest Virginia

9 April, 2014

Chief David Hoback
President Virginia Fire Chief's Association

Ref: 5 Issues of concern

Good evening,

At the spring meeting of the Southwest Virginia Firefighters Association you asked the membership to come up with five issues to be taken back to the Fire Board. After you left the meeting there was a great deal of discussion in the new business portion of the meeting about the direction of fire service training in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The membership has asked that the following items of concern be brought to the Fire Board.

- A) Pre-requisites for training thru the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.
 - a. The membership is concerned that the current pre-requisites for training is keeping members from enrolling in class that would be beneficial to the member or department.
- B) The current Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations class failure rates.
 - a. The feeling is that the current Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations class taught by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs needs to be evaluated and re-developed.
 - b. The concern is the high failure rate and the number firefighters that are having to retake the test or are not passing and getting frustrated and not following thru with additional training.
- C) The role of Pro Board certification in Virginia.
 - a. The membership would like clarification and definition about the role of the Pro Board Certification standards as it relates to the current training standards.
- D) The length of the current Firefighter I program.
 - a. The membership is concerned about the number of hours that make up the current Firefighter I course.
 - b. With the programs current number of hours it is becoming increasingly difficult for volunteers with jobs, children and other responsibilities to complete this level of training.
 - c. One solution that was discussed would divide the program into modules.
- E) The development of continuing education training.
 - a. This would be an opportunity for members of the fire service in Virginia to maintain current training and stay up to date with the newest firefighting information and techniques.

Thank you for giving the membership of the Southwest Virginia Firefighters Association the opportunity to express our concerns and ideas for the continued growth of the fire service in Virginia. We look forward to working with the Department of Fire Programs and the Fire Board in the future.

Sincerely,

The membership of the Southwest Virginia Firefighters Association